



NEWS

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CONTACT: Lucia Libretti
415.749.4900

Open Burning Season Begins for Range Management

The open burning season for range management begins Monday, July 1, and will run through April 30, 2003, according to Ellen Garvey, Air Pollution Control Officer for the Bay Area Air Quality Management District.

Range management fires, which are for disposing of unwanted vegetation from public or private open lands where animals such as horses, cattle and sheep are allowed to graze, must be set or allowed by the public fire official having jurisdiction and must be necessary to maintain and continue the grazing of animals as a gainful occupation.

Range management fires are not allowed before 10:00 am or after two hours prior to sunset, nor shall any material be added to such fires after two hours prior to sunset. In addition, piled material is limited to a base area of 25 square yards and a maximum height of two-thirds the average width of the pile.

Open burning has been regulated in the Bay Area since 1957 because of its considerable contribution to air pollution. While backyard burning of leaves, trash, and grass cuttings or prunings has been prohibited in the Bay Area since 1970, certain fires for agricultural purposes, flood control, fire training and the prevention of fire hazards are exempted from District regulations for specified periods throughout the year.

Although certain fires are allowed during the appropriate burn season, each day of the year is designated as either a BURN or a NO BURN day. On days when air pollution caused by open burning would be minimized by favorable weather conditions, the Air District designates it a BURN day.

Allowed fires can only take place on a BURN day. This means that even though a burn season may be in effect, the party seeking open burn authorization must check with the Air District for daily burn status prior to burning. BURN/NO BURN days are forecasted by 3 p.m. on the District's toll-free number **1-800-HELP-AIR** for the following day.

Open burning seasons apply to the entire Bay Area, including Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, southwestern Solano and southern Sonoma counties.

Bay Area residents may request a brochure about the District's open burning regulation by writing the Public Information Office at 939 Ellis Street, San Francisco, CA 94109, or by calling 415-749-4900. To register complaints about illegal burning or other odor problems, call the District's 24-hour complaint line at 1-800-334-ODOR.

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